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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Revised estimates under sections 3 (Political affairs) and 5 (Peacekeeping operations)

Twelfth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/C.5/54/40 on the revised estimates under sections 3 (Political affairs) and 5 (Peacekeeping operations) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, resulting from the new mandates of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and the Secretary-General's Personal Representative to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority. During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided it with additional information and clarifications.

2. According to the Secretary-General, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and his Personal Representative to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority will encompass the previous functions and responsibilities of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO) and will also be the focal point for overall United Nations assistance to the Middle East peace process. Paragraphs 4 to 6 of the Secretary-General's report provide details on the functions and responsibilities of the Special Coordinator.

3. The Committee notes that, in addition to the provision for UNSCO already included in the proposed programme budget for 2000-2001, the estimated additional costs arising from the new mandates of the Special Coordinator amount to $3,755,800 for the biennium 2000-2001. These estimates provide for 19 additional regular budget posts (5 P-5, 7 P-3, 1 Field Service, 3 Security and Safety and 3 Local level), a reclassification of the post of the current Deputy Special Coordinator from the D-1 to the D-2 level and other non-staff requirements, including $49,600 for consultants and experts, $252,100 for travel, $292,300 for general operating expenses, $9,000 for hospitality and $96,400 for supplies and materials. Supplementary information on activities to be undertaken by the new office and its staffing requirements are shown in annex II to the report (A/C.5/54/40). Upon request, the Committee was provided with a revised version of annex III, section A of the Secretary-General's report, giving a clearer description of requirements; it is contained in the annex to the present report.

4. The Secretary-General indicates in paragraph 10 of his report that as the activities of the Office fall under the programme of Political Affairs, it is proposed that resources in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 related to the activities of the United Nations Special Coordinator currently in section 5 (Peacekeeping

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operations) be transferred to section 3 (Political affairs). Consequently, the Office will be partly financed from existing provisions in the proposed programme budget for 2000-2001 and partly charged against the provision proposed for special political missions under section 3 (Political affairs) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/206.

5. Upon inquiry, the Committee was informed that the proposals contained in document A/C.5/54/40 were made to align the resources under the section of the programme budget which had the responsibility for the activities in question. In the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, the Department of Political Affairs carries out activities related to the prevention, control and resolution of conflicts and assistance and support to the Secretary-General in the political aspects of his relations with Member States. Accountability at the intergovernmental levels with respect to political missions is the responsibility of the Department of Political Affairs. On that basis and in order to reflect activities under the section undertaking the programme of work as defined in the medium-term plan, all resources previously budgeted under section 5 related to the activities of the Special Coordinator are proposed to be transferred from section 5 to section 3, i.e., under the section where the Department of Political Affairs is located. Moreover, the Committee was informed that in future proposed programme budgets, all special political missions, including UNSCO, will be proposed under the section where the Department is located; all requirements for the full implementation of the mandates of the special political missions should be budgeted accordingly. The Committee recalls its observations in paragraph II.7 of its first report on the proposed programme budget for 2000-2001 on the management of resources for special political missions.

6. The Committee notes from annex I of the report that the revised estimates for UNSCO provide also for the establishment of 14 extrabudgetary posts (1 D-1, 1 P-5, 4 P-3 and 8 Local level). The distribution of these posts is reflected in the organigramme of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator (see A/C.5/54/40, annex IV).

7. Upon inquiry, the Committee was informed that with the exception of the D-1 post in the United Nations Affairs Unit, the remaining 13 extrabudgetary posts are project personnel, the cost of which is included under the budget line "Grants and contributions" in annex I, section A.2, "Extrabudgetary resources", of the report (A/C.5/54/40). The Committee points out that the presentation of staffing requirements for the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator should have been made in conformity with the structure of relevant tables of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 and that requirements for extrabudgetary posts should have been fully explained and justified.

8. Upon request, the Committee was informed that an amount of $250,000 is available in the trust fund for activities related to UNSCO. In addition, one Government had indicated that it would contribute an additional $2 million towards the funding of technical advisory service in the area of socio-economic development.

9. Taking into account the comments and observation in the paragraphs above, the Committee has no objection to the Secretary-General's proposal that a provision of $3,755,800 be charged against the provision proposed for special political missions under section 3 (Political affairs) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (including the reclassification of a D-1 post to the D-2 level) and that the related provision for UNSCO already included in the proposed programme budget for 2000-2001 be transferred from section 5 (Peacekeeping operations) to section 3 (Political affairs).

Annex

Revised version of annex III, section A, of document A/C.5/54/40

A. Standard and mission-specific cost parameters

(United States dollars)

	Initial proposed programme budget rates for 2000-2001	*Proposed estimates*				*Explanation*
		Average strength	*Unit or daily cost*	*Monthly cost*	*Total cost*	
1. Staffing						
International staff	14	30				15 per cent turnover factor for new staff.
Local staff	15	18				
Salaries	2 412.50			2 412.50		
Common staff costs	1 516.66			1 516.66		
Consultants						
Fees	5 000			5 000		
Travel (round trip)	4 828			5 930		
DSA (first 30 days)	96		96			
DSA (after 30 days)	64		64			
2. Travel costs (round trip)						
(a) Air						
New York	4 500		5 100			
Geneva	1 500		1 000			
(b) Daily subsistence						Plus supplement of 40 per cent for USG and 15 per cent for Director Level.
New York	275		275			
Geneva			316			
Jerusalem/West Bank	205		205			
Jordan			143			
Lebanon			144			
Syrian Arab Republic			145			
Egypt			153			
3. Premises						
(a) Rental						
Gaza Office	5 100					
Gaza Parking Space	1 000					
Additional Office				4 000		

	Initial proposed programme budget rates for 2000-2001	Proposed estimates				Explanation
		Average strength	Unit or daily cost	Monthly cost	Total cost	
(b) Minor alterations	9 300				21 700	Previous provisions for minor alterations were for painting of office and expansion of radio room and administration office space to make them more secure and functional. Current provisions relate to reconfiguration of offices in new rented premises in respect of new staff requested.
(c) Maintenance supplies	500			500		
(d) Maintenance services	1 200			600		Excluding $800 per month previously required for the maintenance of gardens at the UNSCO compound.
(e) Utilities	1 900			2 000		Reflecting anticipated new contractual arrangements and information concerning what is to be included in the contract for the new rented premises; unit rate increased by $100.
4. Transport operations						
Maintenance of vehicles	1 450			1 200		Previous estimates relate to 19 vehicles and 1 generator. Of the 19 vehicles, 11 are old, thus requiring more repairs and spare parts. Current provisions are for 12 new vehicles, which will need less maintenance.
Petrol, oil and lubricants						
Gasoline	0.30		0.30			Estimated annual consumption for gasoline and gas oil is 10,000 and 20,000 respectively, compared to 20,000 and 30,000, respectively, in previous submission.
Gas oil	0.27		0.27			
Insurance (per vehicle per annum)	825		825			Worldwide third party liability.
5. Commercial						
(a) Communications, spare parts, supplies and maintenance	44 000			10 000		Spare parts for satellite ($20,000) are not included in the PBI estimates, as well as other miscellaneous telecommunications supplies, such as hardware, tools, radio spare parts, heavy batteries and electronic parts ($14,000), which were provided in initial estimates.

	Initial proposed programme budget rates for 2000-2001	Proposed estimates				Explanation
		Average strength	Unit or daily cost	Monthly cost	Total cost	
(b) Commercial communications	7 000			2 000		Estimates include only long-distance telephone calls and facsimile transmission and exclude all other expenditures linked with other commercial communications costs. No need for pro-rata increase due to additional staff.
6. Supplies and services						
(a) Miscellaneous services	1 100			400		Excluding cost of maintenance of systems ($700 per month), i.e., payroll, reality, sun system, progen, reality, newsfeed and lotus notes. Fixed cost not directly linked to additional staff but for systems of office as a whole.
(b) Official hospitality	725			125		Each for Jordan, Lebanon and Syrian Arab Republic. Provisions in proposed programme budget include official functions for meetings of Local Aid Coordination Committee (50 people monthly at $300 per event); Joint Liaison Committee (30 people monthly, $200 per event); United Nations Coordination Committee (20 people monthly, $100 per event); and various sectorial working groups (10 people annually at $50 per event).
(c) Miscellaneous supplies	6 500			2 500		Proposed estimates exclude reproduction, kitchen and other operational supplies, and subscriptions and standing orders.